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Scott Stawiarski <sstawiarski@amforest.org>

Thursday, April 11, 2019 3:21 PM

Brillenz, David B -FS

Drake, Barbara -FS; Francine, Nancy -FS; Davis, Clay R -FS; Murphy, Eric J -FS; Condon, Rachel -FS; Andy Geissler; Cindi Kaneshige; Steve Brink; Travis Joseph

AFRC Big Bar Fire Salvage Project

**Subject:**

April 11, 2019

**In Reply To:** Big Bar Fire Salvage Project

David Brillenz, District Ranger

Feather River Ranger District, Plumas National Forest

The American Forest Resource Council (AFRC) is interested in commenting on the **Big Bar Fire Salvage Project**. This area was severely burned in the Camp Fire in November 2018. The fire received national attention due to the extreme fire behavior which resulted in a serious loss of life and property in the town of Paradise. There is significant public interest in the restoration of this burned area including removal of hazardous fuels and danger trees to protect public safety.

AFRC is a regional trade association whose purpose is to advocate for sustained yield timber harvests on public timberlands throughout the West to enhance forest health and resistance to fire, insects, and disease. We do this by promoting active management to attain productive public forests, protect adjoining private forests, and assure community stability.

We understand that this project is delayed, and public scoping of a proposed action has not occurred. There is an urgent need to move quickly to begin burned area restoration including removal of dead and dying trees while they still have commercial value, so reforestation can be completed before competing vegetation occupies the site. Commercial timber salvage using mechanical harvesting is the most cost effective method to complete the work if done in a timely manner. As the burned trees deteriorate so does the value. Blue stain fungus, a defect that reduces wood quality will immediately begin to reduce commercial value. Fire salvage sales are at best marginally economical because they require rapid removal of a perishable product. Delaying this project could result in no bid sales and implementation of a no action alternative.

Begin public scoping of the proposed action/purpose and need immediately! As a general rule, a draft decision notice should be completed by April of the year following the fire, so salvage sales can be advertised by June while the trees still have commercial value. The Big Bar project is way behind on that timeline. The longer the project is delayed further reduces chances for success.

Please call me if you would like to discuss and keep me informed as the project progresses.

Sincerely,

/s/ *Scott Stawiariski*

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[American Forest Resource Council](#)

cc: AFRC, CFA, Plumas FLT  
John Exline, Director of Ecosystem Management